

with territorial unit, is not organised round a symbolic office such as the Shilluk *rethship*, the Anuak nobility or the Acholi chiefship. The interaction of the segmentary system is the basis of organisation and co-operation. The Lango organisation closely approaches that of the Luo but, until further information is forthcoming as to the exact position of the Lango *rwot* and the polioican importance of the lineage system, the degree of similarity is difficult to determine. On the basis of present knowledge it would seem that the Lango, with their hierarchy of village headman, *jago* and *rwot* are more highly organised than the acephalous Luo, with their ritual experts, elders and lineage heads. 619 171

THE LUO HOMESTEAD

The homestead, the residence of an elementary, or sometimes a joint, family, is generally called a *dala* (Bantu) or *pacho* (Nilotic). It is surrounded with a thick hedge of euphorbia, in which is a narrow gap forming the entrance to the kraal round which are grouped the huts and granaries. 592

According to Evans-Pritchard, there is no real village group. The head of the homestead is the head of the family occupying it. Each married man has his own hut, with huts for his wives on either side. Unmarried women live in a hut looked after by an old woman, and single men occupy a bachelors' hut near the gate in order to guard against cattle thieves. Sons often go and found their own homesteads if they wish to be independent. The eldest son eventually builds his wife a hut of her own outside his father's homestead and the younger brothers will later do the same. The large polygynous family thus splits up gradually as the sons extend their own family units and form separate homesteads. This process is completed with the death of the original *won dala* and the inheritance of the widows. The first wife is the chief wife of the homestead, but a husband sets aside so many cattle for each of his wives for use by their families and these are inherited by the sons on the father's death. 591 592

INHERITANCE

Property is inherited by a man's sons or, failing sons, by his brother. A widow, on the death of her husband is inherited by one of his brothers, by a distant kinsman, or, if she is still young, by a son born of a different wife. The widow is *ci liend*, 'the wife of the grave',⁽¹⁾ and children born to her are called after the dead husband who is regarded as their *pater*. 428 587 851

MARRIAGE

Bridewealth

The number of bridewealth animals varies according to circumstances. Before the cattle plagues at the end of the 19th century 20 to 40 cattle were given; in 1932 the usual number was 15 to 20, and since that time the number has been further reduced. According to Evans-Pritchard the bride-wealth cattle fall into two parts:⁽²⁾ 583

1. The *dho keny*: the animals first handed over by the husband and due to

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *Africa* XX, 1950, p.141. (2) *Ibid.*, p.139.

583

brothers. The bride's maternal uncle generally gets a heifer, the *dher nyakwo*, the cow of the sister's daughter, but it is not, I think, regarded as being part of the bridewealth and the payment in no way concerns the father of the bride. It is given to the maternal uncle in return for gifts, may be a ram, some chickens, and some eleusine, and for hospitality to the husband; for a well-disposed maternal uncle invites him to his home. The uncle has no legal right to the heifer. The Luo say that the *mer* is only an *ora*, the maternal uncle is only an in-law (of the father of the bride).

The last of the animals to be paid seems to be the *ruath ringo*, the ox of the meat, to which I have earlier referred. It is also called *hedho* and by other names. This ox is sometimes not paid till several years after the bride has been through the final rites of marriage. The husband's people drive it to the mother-in-law's home, arriving very early in the morning before the people are up, and they take the further precaution of severing the tendon of one of its legs as they drive it into the kraal, so that the young men of the home cannot seize it and add it to their herd. It is meat for the mother and not an ox for the herd of her husband and sons: It is then killed in front of the mother's hut. The wife's parents probably make the husband's party a return present of a sheep. They eat part of it in the home of the wife's parents and take the rest of the meat back with them to their own people.

It should be noted that the bride's family have to make return gifts to the husband's people and that these are also called *miloha*. Some of the gifts are animals slaughtered during the marriage rites, but it seems that they also have to pay one or two other beasts at various times to the husband's people. I was told that they hand over at least three head of cattle altogether, or as many as five if they are rich, including those killed for meat during the ceremonies. This is a point that invites further inquiry.

586

Everything paid by the husband's people to the wife's family counts as bridewealth and should there be a divorce the husband can demand their return, together with the progeny of the animals of the bridewealth. However, Luo regard divorce as a grave misfortune, and if the breach is occasioned by the wife's misbehaviour or is due to her running away from her husband, her parents make every effort to maintain the alliance they have entered into with the husband's people by replacing her by a sister or cousin. Also, if a wife dies the return of her bridewealth is regarded as a last and most undesirable resort. Instead, her parents try to replace her by a sister or cousin. This is known as *apongo dhuonga*, the filling of the basket. The husband may have to wait many years before he gets his new wife. He has to go through the full ceremonies of marriage with her and to pay bridewealth, though only a few cows, perhaps five or six. More are asked for if the replacement is from a different family. In the event of the bridewealth being returned, two or three head of cattle, according to the circumstances of the case and the sex of the child, are retained by the wife's people for any child she bore her husband, the child remaining with him. I believe that after the birth of a second child no cattle would be returned. However, even when a wife dies leaving several children behind her, her parents try to give the husband a relative in her place to keep up the alliance.

Ci liend

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587

When a marriage has been completed, that is to say after a child has been born, it is regarded by Luo as a union which should not in any circumstances be broken. If the

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS OF THE LUO OF KENYA

141

wife dies she ought to be replaced by her sister. The counterpart to this custom of the sororate is the levirate, the raising up of seed to a dead man by one of his brothers. A widow is normally taken by one of her dead husband's brothers, though if she chooses to live with a more distant kinsman of her husband her wishes will be respected. Occasionally she is taken by one of her husband's sons by a different wife, but this is rare and although not *kwer* (forbidden) it is not encouraged because it is thought that the union will not be fruitful. When it happens, it is a young and recently married wife who is taken by the son, sometimes at the express wish of the father. Brothers are the proper mates for widows and the proper guardians of their children. It is customary to get a *jamwa*, Bantu, or *jadak*, a person outside the clan, to sleep with the widow before the brother does so, in case the husband's ghost is troublesome. The trouble will then fall on the Bantu or stranger.

It must be clearly understood that the taking of a widow by her dead husband's brother is not a remarriage. No bridewealth is paid, and any children the brother may beget by the widow are called after the dead husband and not after him. The dead husband is their *pater*. His brother is only their *genitor*. If they are girls, it is their brothers and not the man who begat them who receive their bridewealth. The begetter receives only the two animals due to a father's brother, one of which is referred to in these circumstances as the cow of the begetting (*dher nysolo* or *dher oding*). Also, one does not use the verb *kendo*, the ordinary word for marrying a wife, in reference to the widow, but *atero* or *alago*, which have the sense of taking a woman to live with her. The widow is *ci liend*, the wife of the grave, that is, the wife of her dead husband.

Luo

Luo practise very extensive avoidance, as part of a general attitude of respect (*lur*), of their wife's people—whom the husband calls *kaorca* (my in-laws). If a man meets either of his parents-in-law on a path he makes a detour, and if he has to speak to them he does so with his back turned to them, especially when he speaks to his mother-in-law, who also turns her back to him. Even to-day when men wear clothes a son-in-law does not visit his mother-in-law without a strip of hide over his genitals. A man who neglects these rules is said to be *wangatek*, to have strong eyes, and he makes a gift in compensation for his negligence. A man respects the whole lineage into which he has married. He can face the younger people but not their elders. He respects also the older people of the lineage of his wife's maternal uncle, for they are also his *owe*, his in-laws. The husband's brothers respect only his parents-in-law and their immediate kin of their own generation.

When the wife has borne a child the rules of avoidance are relaxed and as the years go on and more children are born relations between a man and his parents-in-law become more informal. A ceremony is held, perhaps after the birth of the first child, to enable the husband to enter his mother-in-law's hut and partake of a meal there instead of keeping strictly to the *simba* on his visits to her home. The wife's parents send the *jagan* to summon him and his relatives and friends—all those whom the wife calls *karuga*, my husband's people—and when they arrive there are set before them in the mother-in-law's hut a large dish of fish, beer, melted butter, and the cooked meat of an ox killed to celebrate the occasion. They are invited to eat. The husband is silent but his brothers say that they cannot eat till they are given a goat.

village is a long way off the girl's relations sleep at his village, but if they can manage to do so they return the same day. Next day the bridegroom's brothers and his other wives take the bride back to her father's village and there is a great feast and *tembo* drink; the bridegroom does not go. 585

The father of the girl next day presents his daughter with a goat and she returns to her husband. The girl's husband then continues to make payments to his father-in-law; the total amount it is necessary to pay varies from two to six cows; if he stops paying his wife will go off to her father's village and stay there for a month or so until the man resumes payments. Before the big attack of cattle plague in 1890 and 1891 it is said that as many as forty cows were sometimes paid for a wife. 583 585

If a woman does not bear her husband a child quickly the husband stops his payments, but the husband has no claim for the return of any of the property as long as the woman stays with him. If a wife dies and has borne no children the property is returned, or one of her sisters is given the man to wife and the man only pays about twenty goats for the sister. 583 587

If a woman will not stop with her husband she is married to some one else, and the first husband is repaid from what the second husband pays. If a woman has a child and is ill-treated she can leave her husband but the child belongs to him; if the child be a boy, when it grows up and the mother grows old she will generally come back to live with her son. If after a marriage has been arranged a father is loth to part with his daughter the young man employs his friends to waylay the girl in the daytime. If the girl however refuses to stay at her suitor's village and runs away, the property paid over is returned without delay and the match is broken off. If a woman remains unmarried for a longer period than usual she often goes off to a chief or someone with plenty of cattle and states that she intends to stay there and cook for him; in such a case she is usually taken to wife, but the man pays much less than is nominally customary. Chiefs have from ten to forty wives. They are generally speaking very moral in their domestic relations. They do not intermarry in the same clan, but a man will marry the daughter of a man named the same as himself. 586 583 [622 595] [582]

Pottery.—All pottery is made by women and is similar to that of the Bantu Kavirondo, and consists of water pots, cooking pots, *tembo* pots, etc. 323

Dyes; tanning.—These people do not use dyes, neither do they tan, but they soften skins by rubbing in fat and hand-working till soft. 281 386

Arms, etc.—Their shields were formerly made of buffalo hide but are now made of cow hide; the shields are usually very large, curving round the body of the man carrying it. They also make shields of ambatch wood (called *Orindi*). They have a great fancy for spears with shafts of enormous length, ten feet or more; the heads are very small and insignificant. Use *aimés* and clubs to a small extent; the former weapons are however I think copied from the Masai or Nandi. Also use bows and arrows; the arrows were formerly poisoned, but 411

Some Customs of the Luwo (or Nilotic Kavirondo) living in South Kavirondo. 265

the ear of father, mother and child. But 10 days later, on the day of the feast, the father's head is only shaven above the ear again. Those of mother and child, however, are shaven clear (*bwanyo wich*). The feast is prepared much like for a babe-boy, but there is no *awinja*, and the performance with the ladle does not take place. Neither is the woman ornamented like after the birth of a boy; because the girl later on will not belong to that part of the country; she will be married out and live and die elsewhere.

If the husband has more wives, he is not entitled to conjugal rights with any of them until after the birth of a child the feast has taken place, and he has slept again with the mother of the child. If he would brake this rule, the new-born babe would waste away and die (*omiyo nyathi chira*).

Adultery is reckoned a serious offence by both husband and wife. If the woman knows that her husband is misbehaving in this way, she will refuse cohabitation, for if she is with a child cohabitations would result in a miscarriage. If a woman commits adultery her husband may send her away, and claim the dowry he has paid for her. However, if she brings forth a child born from adultery he will reckon the child to be his own, as the woman is his, nobody else's for he has properly married her.

A widow is given in marriage to the full brother or the nearest relation of her deceased husband. If she goes to his full brother, or in case he had none, to his nearest relation, and if she begets children by him, then these children will be reckoned to be the children of her new husband. In case her deceased husband has a full brother but she does not like him, or he is still too young to take her as his wife, some other near relative will take the widow. But the children born by them will be called the children of the deceased husband. The present husband is only a borrowed one. Hence, when the girls born to them grow up and get married, the real brother of deceased husband will receive the full dowry paid for them minus one cow for each girl, which cow goes to the real father of the girl for bringing her up.

When the boys born by them grow up and get married they will leave the kraal and build their own apart, unless their real father helps them to get married by paying the dowry.

If a woman has given birth to twins, both she and her husband are not allowed to leave the hut at all for 20 days; not even for nature's call. A hole is dug in the floor of the hut, and an old bottomless cooking pot is put over it, and this is used as a W. C. During those 20 days new beer is brewn. When the time has elapsed and the beer is ready, a bull is killed and its hide is dried for the parents of the twins to sleep on. For on that day some old woman will take away the old hide, which they used for that purpose. The relations of the woman also kill a bull and brew beer, which they bring along to the village where the twins are born. After their arrival the father and the mother with the twins sit down near the entrance of the kraal, together with an old woman who beats a drum. The visitors from the woman's home, the people of the kraal and of all the neighbourhood in turn go up to the mother of the twins, who has got some white clay (*rongo* or *migosi*) mixed with water in a small vessel. She dips her finger in it and

765 basketful of kaffir-corn. This corn is used to make beer from for the feast of shav-
ing and smearing of the grave with mud, which takes place after 3 months (not 6,
as in the case of husband's death). On that day also the parents of the deceased
587 woman bring another daughter, however small she may be at the time, which girl
is to replace the deceased daughter, and will become the wife of the widower. They
even may wait for a daughter still to be born, if deceased has no sister. But if the
mother is old, and has no daughter to put in deceased's place, then the father may
put a daughter by another wife in her place. This girl, though she may be a child
in arms yet, is shown to the widower, who is not allowed to refuse her as his future
wife, but has to wait till she is grown up. When the girl is about 10 years old a
small temporary hut is built for her, in which she sleeps with her future husband
for one night. Then she returns home till she is marriageable, after a heavy iron
ring has been put round her left ankle, which remains as a sign, that she has taken
the place of a deceased sister.

The widower, however, is at liberty to marry another girl in the meantime,
but the deceased wife's sister will later be considered as his first wife (*dhako*
maduong).

764 On the morning after the death of either husband or wife 2 bulls are killed.
The first is sacrificed and eaten, there and then, by anybody coming for the fune-
ral, the other one is simply killed for the relations.

769 When about 12 months have elapsed after the death of a woman, the same
customs of distributing the ornaments of deceased, and the brewing of beer for all
the relations and neighbours are observed, as take place on the anniversary of the
death of a married man.

Burial of a Child.

765 Small children, whether boys or girls are bewailed by the women only. The
reason for this is that the people have a superstition which says that if a father
bewails his child his wives will not bring forth any more.

Grown up boys and girls are bewailed by the men also, but only for a short
time and not by big crowds. The mother may bewail her child for a period of about
2 months every morning for a short time. She sits down beside the grave, where
270 she lights a little fire to protect herself against the cold. Her wailing is interrupted
now and again for the purpose of smoking a pipe.

765 After the child's death the mother may not get her head shaven until after
834 her next menstruation. Only after this her husband is allowed to sleep in her hut
and observe the conjugal rights. Until he has done this the husband is not allowed
to observe those rights with any of his other wives. If he would break this rule he
would make the mother of the dead child barren for the rest of her life.

764 Adult boys are buried on the left hand side of the hut a few yards away,
smaller boys on the same side but under the roof outside; girls in the same way,
but on the right hand side.

For adult children, whether boys or girls, the usual dancing, etc. take
place, the same as for married people.

If a girl dies for whom the dowry has been fully paid, but for some reason

1/2 [The third day after burial] - Analyst

Besides dowry payments the Luo had other means of obtaining cattle before the advent of the Europeans. Two of these ways, which no longer exist, were the capturing of enemies' cattle during inter-tribal wars and robbery during the night. Because there were only few cattle in those days the number of cattle paid for dowries was very limited, not even half of what it is today. 721 674 583 178

Inheritance and exchange are now the natural means by which the Luo obtain cattle. As mentioned above in discussing dowry the first eight to twelve cattle paid for a dowry, though nominally known as the property of the father of the girl, are in the real sense the inheritance of her full brothers. The father can do anything he likes with them during his life-time, provided he consults the girl's eldest brother. It frequently happens that there is disagreement between the sons and the father, who may try to dispose of these animals without consulting the sons. The other animals belong to certain individuals, e.g., father, uncles and mother. Those of the father if he is a polygamist are inherited by one of his sons who has no sisters. If the father has two or more sisterless sons born of different mothers they inherit equally the special cattle he gets from the dowry of those daughters who have full brothers. These sons also inherit the cattle, goats or sheep that he gets by other means, e.g., those obtained by exchanging millet or maize and those paid to him for the dowries of his nieces. Cattle paid to the mother-in-law by her son-in-law are inherited by her eldest or last son. Usually a father gives more to a son whose mother has died if he is a good son. He calls this son his orphan. If a father loves one of his sons more than the others he may take some of his cattle to one or other of his friends, and tell him that they can only be taken after his death by the loved son. 422 428 595

A man inherits his brother's animals if the brother dies and leaves no son. If a man, having a brother, dies before having children by his wife, and the widow marries someone else of her husband's clan, children born to her by her new husband belong to the brother of her former husband, and so, if they are girls, the brother inherits most of the cattle paid for their dowries. If, however, these girls have a brother, he inherits the cattle. 428 [587]

Some people start to obtain cattle by exchanging their millet or maize for sheep, goats and poultry in the first instance, and when the number of these small stock has increased, they, in turn, are exchanged for cattle. Sometimes a man gives his friend an assurance that if he gives him some goats he will in return give a heifer which can be kept until she calves. After weaning, the calf remains the property of the friend while the cow is returned. 437

273
234 Both sexes drink the *beer* which is made from grain, but the women never drink with the men. The women make the *butter*.

326 The men do not *smelt iron*, but obtain it in pig form from the Bantu
437 Kavirondo. There is even a certain prejudice against *blacksmiths* amongst
[504] the Ja-luo. They are called "Yotheth," and among some of the tribes constitute a separate caste called "Uvino." They *forge* spears, knives, bill-hooks, and axes, but their hoes are imported from their Bantu neighbours. *Shields* are made of buffalo or ox hide, and also of ambatch wood. Their *spears* have small heads, and shafts of tremendous length. They use *clubs*, and also long leaf-shaped swords, which they have borrowed from the Masai or Nandi. Bows and arrows are still employed, but the arrows are no longer poisoned. Poison was said to be derived from the venom of snakes, and also from certain herbs. Their musical instruments are very similar to those of the Kavirondo Bantu.

583 Girls are betrothed at the age of seven, and go to their husbands
584 at the age of ten or eleven, payment being made by degrees over the years elapsing between the betrothal and the *marriage*. The girl is taken
585 by her unmarried girl companions to her husband's house. The father of the girl kills an ox and takes the meat, together with a quantity of sorghum porridge, to the bridegroom's house to provide a *wedding feast*. On the following day the bridegroom's brothers, and his other wives, if he has any, take the newly wedded wife back to her father's village, where there is another great feast. The bridegroom does not attend. The father of the girl next day presents his daughter with a goat, and she returns to her husband, who continues to make payments to his father-in-law. The total amount of the marriage payment may reach to six cows, or their equivalent. If the man stops paying, his wife will leave him and go back to her father's village until the payments are resumed. If within a year of the marriage the woman does not bear a child, the husband may stop his payments, but he has no claim to the return of what has been already paid, so long as his wife remains with him. If a wife dies without having borne children, the amount paid for her is returned, unless the husband agrees to accept one of his *deceased wife's sisters*, for whom only a small complimentary present is paid. If a woman refuses to stop with her husband, she is given to another man, and whatever this man gives for her is paid over to her first husband. If a woman has a child and is ill-treated, she may leave her husband, but must leave her child behind with the father. If the child be a boy, when he grows up and the mother gets old she generally returns to live with her son. If after
583 a marriage has been arranged an avaricious father is loth to part with his daughter, the young man employs his friends to waylay the girl in the daytime. If, however, the girl after capture refuses to stop with her

765 a dead person shave their heads for three days after the death. The
 eldest son of the deceased sits on a stool outside the village, and has his
 head shaved. If any one of importance dies, the neighbours do not
 766 cultivate for three days after the death. If a big chief dies, all the
 surrounding people collect at the village, and in such cases even hostilities
 between clans are suspended, and all join in the funeral rites of the late
 chief, even if he happens to be at war with some of his dependent clans.
 In the case of the death of a chief, a new hut is built. The grave of the
 chief is dug by his brother. A new ox hide is placed at the bottom of
 the grave, and the head of the corpse is covered with a water-pot. Seeds
 of every kind of grain grown in the vicinity are put into the grave, but
 sweet potatoes are excluded. The people dance and drink "tembo" for ten
 days, and slaughter many oxen. The men wall for ten days, but the women
 wall every morning for a year. No one cultivates the fields for ten days.

428 When a man dies, his property goes to the brother, if the children are
 small. If the eldest son is grown up, he takes the property and gives his
 brothers a share, but a man is not allowed to take the amount paid by
 any one who marries one of his sisters. This marriage payment goes to
 [58] the deceased father's brothers. The brothers of the deceased take his wives,
 but the eldest son probably takes the youngest wife of his deceased
 [62] father. When a chief dies, the son whom he has chosen succeeds him.
 This successor is chosen really some years before the chief dies. The
 successor divides the private property of the chief with his brothers.

727 When a warrior has killed a man in warfare, he must (besides
 shaving his head) catch a fowl and hang it round his neck head uppermost.
 782 He must not enter his home village until this has been done. Whilst
 the fowl is suspended to the man's neck by the beak its head is covered
 from the body, and the head is left hanging from the man's neck. The
 warrior then enters the village, and shortly afterwards prepares a big feast
 to propitiate the man he has killed, so that his ghost may not give
 trouble. If a house is struck by lightning, and any one is killed inside,
 788 the head-man of the village must obtain a male fowl of a red colour and
 walk round the house holding up the fowl three times. The house is
 then broken up, and the wood is used for other purposes. When desiring
 728 to make peace with another tribe with whom they have been at war,
 they kill a sheep and put part of it into a wooden mortar such as is
 used for crushing grain. The representatives of each side then take out
 pieces of the flesh and exchange them reciprocally. An old man belonging
 to the side which has been worsted, and which is suing for peace, must
 [23] then go to the head village of the conqueror and proceed to sweep up the
 cattle kraal. This is accepted as a kind of submission.

145 Like the Bantu Kavirondo, the Ja-luo are in the main a healthy people.

1906.]

MAN

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when they pass outside; this happens before the "saguna," and is a sort of honour to the dead.

The wife or wives of the deceased person go to the sons, the eldest having preference, but in no case does a son take his own mother, and any property of the deceased man is taken by the sons in the proportion of the dowry originally paid by the father for the wife which each son has claimed.

Should a wife of the dead man have a daughter, or several daughters and sons, the dowry received in the event of one of them being married will go to the girl's brother, and not to the step-father; but in the event of the girl having no brother, the step-father will claim the dowry.

A. S. MILLIKIN.

[p.55]

THE FAMILY

23

to his home and continue to live in the *simbu*, the bride not cooking on her own, but in the veranda of her mother-in-law's hut, and her food not being eaten by her husband (who continues to eat his mother's food) but only by the young men. Later still the ceremony of *riso* is performed, which is considered a final confirmation of the marriage contract by the two families. However, further ceremonies follow, in which the husband gives his father-in-law the bull of *alisch* and his mother-in-law the goat of *anw thumda*. Then the father-in-law settles upon his daughter the heifer of *ataha*, a bull, two goats, and a hoe, in token that he now gives up all claim upon his daughter as long as the marriage continues. Eventually husband and wife move out of the *simbu* into a new hut built for her by him, and she begins to cook on her own and he to eat her food. The sequence of ceremonies associated with marriage is thus complicated and protracted. There is no specified time schedule, but the bride may have given birth several times before they are concluded.

Less prestige attaches to the form of marriage contracted by a man and woman without prior formal approval from their respective families. This occurred in the past if a girl was made pregnant in the *simbu* and was sent straight to her lover, or on the elopement of a married woman with her adulterer, or on the remarriage of a divorced woman. This type of marriage is becoming very common today, when adherence to traditional ritual is lax, and when the young are able with impunity to short-cut both the tedious formalities and the great expenses of the most approved form of marriage. In this form of marriage cattle are still claimed by the bride's father, or by the former husband in the case of divorce and remarriage, but they are fewer in number. The essential differences from the first type of marriage are that the bride loses her virginity before any sort of marriage negotiation has taken place between the two families, and the contract eventually made between them is a recognition of a *fait accompli* instead of the careful planning of a mutually approved match.

A dead man's widows are normally taken up by his kinsmen at the final ceremonies of the funeral, a year or more after the death. These kinsmen are nearly always husband's brothers or stepsons to the widows and they would certainly never be kinsmen from outside the dead man's minimal class A lineage; but the Luo do not consciously relate the matter of widow inheritance to a specific grade of lineage. Among their husband's close kinsmen widows are allowed considerable freedom of choice. It was considered desirable that a man should replace a wife who had died, or a wife who was barren, by a sister of hers, which he could usually do for an amount of bridewealth far smaller than that of the original marriage. Ritual offences rather than infidelities were considered grounds for divorce. If the wife was judged guilty the husband claimed back the bridewealth cattle, less deductions of one head for the wife's work during the marriage, two for each girl, and three for each boy born of it, and others to replace those consumed in the marriage ceremonies. But if the husband was at fault he might be prevented from claiming any cattle back by a brother demanding the woman in his stead.

As has been stated, the cattle of a homestead are all herded together, but there are clearly recognized divisions in the ownership of the herd. There are three main categories: the cattle owned by the father, the cattle owned by his wives, and the cattle held in trust by them for the marriages of their sons. Though the father cannot interfere with the two latter categories except by agreement, he is regarded none the

African Homicide and Suicide

159 appropriate prestige of beer parties and entertainment of his father's friends. On the day of the suicide, a group of the father's friends arrived at the village and the father asked his son's wife to prepare food and drink for them. This she refused to do, so that night he burned himself in his house, which the Luo believe brought ruin to the lineage and particularly to his son.

762 The next case is an interesting one because it illustrates an inherent Luo trait: the profound jealousy of anyone who is successful.

159
556
754
152 Suicide Case No. 9.

• [587] The man who died was the brother of the suicide in case number 2, and took the latter's wives as leviratic wives. He also inherited his gardens. Shortly after this, he began to prosper phenomenally. The elders state that his cattle produced mostly heifers and some produced twin heifers. His crops were better than his neighbors, so they began soon to suspect him of witchcraft. In the space of a few years as his prosperity increased, he was more and more ostracized from the activities of the community. The final blow came when his own *libamba*, minimal lineage group, denied him entrance to a lineage sacrifice on the grounds that he was a witch. Ten years after his brother's suicide, almost to a day, he hanged himself.

When the elders were questioned as to whether or not this man was a witch, they replied that he could not possibly have been a witch, because he had committed suicide. If he were a witch, his medicine would have been so powerful that the effect of being ostracized by the community would not have bothered him at all, let alone driven him to suicide.

762 The Luo believe that those most likely to commit suicide are those who have descended from a lineage in which there has been a history of suicide. Case number 2 was the brother of case number 9, and case number 5 the son of case number

853 when a mother is eating she will hear her child cry out
[854] for some of her food.

From six to nine months, gruel continues to be the staple article of diet. In certain strict families adult food is not given until the child is over a year old. Babies fed on cow's milk begin using adult food during the first or second month.

[784] *Restrictions on the suckling of babies.* It is considered a breach of taboo for a nursing mother to suckle her

[761] neighbour's child. This restriction is based on the fear that some woman with poor milk may, in suckling a

[177] baby, kill it. One of my informants pointed out that in the early days of missionary work an attempt to break this taboo had failed. She said that many of the children thus suckled had died, and the attempt had been abandoned.

[603] One exception to the restriction, however, is that of a mother-in-law. In cases of necessity she is permitted to suckle her daughter-in-law's child because it is assumed that her milk has stood the test.

853 In rare instances there seems to be different treatment
595 of male and female children in a polygamous home with regard to suckling. Some of my informants stated that inter-suckling is permitted if all the nursing mothers have female babies.

[587] Nevertheless, the taboo against inter-suckling of male babies is reinforced by the fact that it is possible for a son to marry one of his father's younger wives. Hence a woman refuses to suckle a child who might become her husband on the death of the father.

853 The social restriction with regard to the suckling of
[177] infants is still observed with rigidity, and there are no evidences of a change even under the impact of modern ideas.

Methods of feeding. No force is used in feeding young babies. A little gruel in a small container is put to the